VII.   Claims

What is claimed is:

1.   A method of identifying a mailpiece in a mailpiece sorting system, using an identification code corresponding to an identification file, comprising the steps of:

marking the mailpiece with the identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

creating the identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

using the identification code to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises a start code.

3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises a class of mail code.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises an origin optical character reader code.

5.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises a date code.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises a time code.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises a mailpiece sequence code.

5

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises a stop code.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification code comprises:

10

a start code;

a class of mail code;

an origin optical character reader code;

a date code;

a time code;

a mailpiece sequence code; and

15

a stop code.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification file comprises the identification code.

20

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the identification file comprises a postal code.

12.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification file comprises an image capture time.

13.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification file comprises a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file.

14.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identification file comprises:

the identification code; and

a postal code.

15.   The method of claim 11, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

16.   The method of claim 14, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

17.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

using the identification code to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

18.   A system for identifying a mailpiece in a mailpiece sorting system, using an identification code corresponding to an identification file, comprising:

a marking component configured to mark the mailpiece with the identification

code on the back of the mailpiece;

a creating component configured to create the identification file corresponding to

the identification code, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of

nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

a using component configured to use the identification code to retrieve

identification information from the corresponding identification file at a plurality of nodes

on the mailpiece sorting system.

19.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises a start code.

20.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises a class of mail

code.

21.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises an origin

optical character reader code.

22.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises a date code.

23.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises a time code.

24.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises a mailpiece sequence code.

25.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises a stop code.

5

26.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification code comprises:

a start code;

a class of mail code;

an origin optical character reader code;

10   a date code;

a time code;

a mailpiece sequence code; and

a stop code.

15   27.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification file comprises the identification code.

28.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification file comprises a postal code.

20   29.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification file comprises an image capture time.

30.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification file comprises a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file.

31.   The system of claim 18, wherein the identification file comprises:

the identification code; and

a postal code.

32.   The system of claim 28, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

33.   The system of claim 31, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

34.   The system of claim 18, wherein the using component further comprises:

an any node using component configured to use the identification code to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

35.   A system for identifying a mailpiece in a mailpiece sorting system, using an identification code corresponding to an identification file, comprising:

means for marking the mailpiece with the identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

means for creating the identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

means for using the identification code to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

5

36.   A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying a mailpiece in a mailpiece sorting system, the computer readable code comprising:

a marking module configured to mark the mailpiece with the identification code on the back of the mailpiece;

a creating module configured to create the identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

a using module configured to use the identification code to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

- 51 -